

Application No. 10/601,927  
Amendment dated August 28, 2003  
Reply to Notice of Omitted Items of August 18, 2003

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert a new fifth paragraph on page 1, beginning at line 24 to read as follows:

According to the invention of ~~Claim 1~~, there is provided an airbag apparatus having an airbag and mounted to a motorcycle. The airbag includes inflation control means. The inflation control means is constructed so as to restrict the inflation of the airbag in an occupant moving direction when the motorcycle comes in a frontal collision and to allow inflation of the airbag in a direction intersecting the occupant moving direction. Cooperation of the restriction of the inflation in the occupant moving direction and the allowance of the inflation in the direction intersecting the moving direction promotes the inflation of the airbag in the direction intersecting the occupant moving direction. Therefore, an occupant restraint area can be increased for the occupant moving direction.

Please insert a new third paragraph on page 3, beginning at line 17 to read as follows:

In the airbag apparatus of ~~Claim 1~~, preferably, the inflation control means includes tethering means. Preferably, the tethering means connects at least the opposing portions of the airbag to restrict the inflation of the airbag in the occupant moving direction in a frontal collision. Since the tethering means connects the opposing portions of the airbag in the occupant moving direction in the frontal collision, the invention offers an advantage in increasing the rigidity of the airbag during the occupant restraint, and particularly, increasing the reaction force of the airbag against the kinetic energy of the occupant who is moving forward by the impact of the frontal collision ~~in addition to the advantages of the invention of Claim 1.~~

Please insert a new second paragraph on page 4, beginning at line 10 to read as follows:

According to another aspect of the invention of ~~Claim 3~~, there is provided an airbag apparatus having an airbag and mounted to a motorcycle. The airbag includes a tether extending so as to connect the opposing portions of the airbag. Preferably, the tether can employ a strap-shaped tether. The arrangement of "connecting the opposing portions of the airbag" broadly includes an arrangement in which the two opposing portions are connected with the tether in the shortest distance and an arrangement in which the opposing portions of the airbag are connected with the tether arranged along the inner periphery or outer periphery of the airbag. The number of the connecting portions and the number of the tethers are not limited. For example, in addition to the opposing portions, other portions of the airbag may be connected with one tether or, alternatively, the plurality of portions may be connected together with a plurality of tethers. Furthermore, a plurality of tethers may be arranged to connect a plurality of portions.

Please insert a new third paragraph on page 4, beginning at line 23 to read as follows:

In the airbag apparatus according to another aspect of the invention of ~~Claim 3~~, inflation of the airbag in the extending direction of the tether is restricted to allow the inflation of the airbag to be guided in the direction that intersects the extending direction of the tether, thus rationally increasing the occupant restraint area of the airbag by appropriately controlling the restricting direction of the inflation of the airbag with the tether. Particularly, in the invention, the tethers for restricting the inflation are arranged in a plurality of portions of the airbag, so that the inflation of the airbag can be adjusted so that the shape of the inflated airbag fits to the front body form of the occupant or, alternatively, the shape of the inflated airbag is appropriately set, so that it can be controlled which part of the occupant first comes in contact with the airbag.

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Please insert a new second paragraph on page 5, beginning at line 5 to read as follows:

The feature of the invention of ~~Claim 3~~ that the shape of the inflated airbag can appropriately be controlled with the tether is effective particularly in preventing pitching motion. More specifically, the inflation of the airbag is appropriately restricted with the tether, ~~as in Claim 4~~, so that the possibility that the occupant is thrown out forward from above the inflated airbag can be minimized, thus ensuring complete protection of the occupant in the event of an accident.

Please delete the fourth paragraph on page 5, beginning at line 19 as follows:

~~According to the invention of Claim 5, there is provided a motorcycle having an airbag apparatus according to any one of Claims 1 to 4.~~

Please insert a new fifth paragraph on page 5, beginning at line 21 through page 6, line 2, to read as follows:

In another aspect of the inventions of ~~Claims 6 and 7~~, there is provided a rational method of manufacturing an airbag apparatus offering advantages that are substantially similar to some of those of the previously discussed airbag apparatuses of ~~Claims 1 and 3~~. More specifically, ~~according to the invention of Claim 6~~, there is provided a method of manufacturing an airbag apparatus wherein the inflation of the airbag is restricted for the occupant moving direction when the motorcycle comes in a frontal collision, thus increasing the occupant restraint area in the event of an accident without particularly increasing the size of the airbag. Of course, it is also possible to provide a method of manufacturing an airbag apparatus having components similar to those of the airbag apparatuses as previously set forth ~~in the dependent claim of Claim 1~~.

Please insert a new second paragraph on page 6, beginning at line 3 to read as follows:

In another form of the invention ~~of Claim 7~~, when the tether is arranged to the airbag, the opposing portions of the airbag are connected with the tether so that the inflation of the airbag in the extending direction of the tether is restricted when the motorcycle comes in a frontal collision. Accordingly, the occupant restraint area can rationally be increased by controlling the extending direction of the tether as appropriate without particularly increasing the size of the airbag. Of course, it is also possible to provide a method of manufacturing an airbag apparatus having components similar to some of those of the previously discussed airbag apparatuses ~~as set forth in the dependent claim of Claim 3~~.

Please insert a new fourth paragraph on page 12, beginning at line 20 to read as follows:

In other words, "An airbag apparatus is provided in preferred forms ~~according to either one of Claims 1 to 4~~, wherein the inflation of the airbag in a direction of the resultant force of a first direction of the airbag and a direction different from the first direction is restricted by the connection of opposing portions in the first direction and the connection of opposing portions in the direction different from the first direction."

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please add the attached Figs. 13 and 14.

REMARKS

The specification is amended herein to delete references to the claims to put the application in more standard U.S. format.

With respect to the omitted figures described in the specification, Applicants elect option III in the Notice to maintain the original filing date of the present application. It is submitted that the subject matter of Figs. 13 and 14 proposed to be added to the application is adequately described in the specification such that no new matter concerns are presented by their addition.

In the application, there are four different forms of airbag apparatuses that are shown and described. Figures 13 and 14 relate to the third form of an airbag 321 wherein a single tether 327 connects at opposing portions of the central panel 321a. Figure 15 on file in the present application also shows a view of the airbag 321 with the tether 327 connected at the rear portion of the panel 321a. Added Figures 13 and 14 simply show this tether 327 also connected at the front portion of the panel 321a, which arrangement is well described in the application at page 4, lines 5-9 and page 12, lines 4-6. Moreover, many of the filed claims cover this precise arrangement and, in fact, claim 6 describes it with particular clarity. Claim 6 recites a connector (such as tether 327) that is connected to the air bag central panel at one end and to the central panel (or optionally to side panels) at its opposite end. Taken together, these descriptions of the air bag 321 clearly support the subject matter shown in Figs. 13 and 14.

In addition, Fig. 13 is a front view of the air bag 321 and Fig. 14 is a side view of the air bag 321 which identically track the corresponding views of Figs. 3 and 4, respectively, for the first version of the air bag 121 described in the application, except for the number of tether attachments to the front portion of the central panels of the respective airbags, which aspect is well described in the text of the specification and the claims as set forth above.

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Based on the foregoing, addition of Figs. 13 and 14 to the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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August 28, 2003

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FIGURE 13

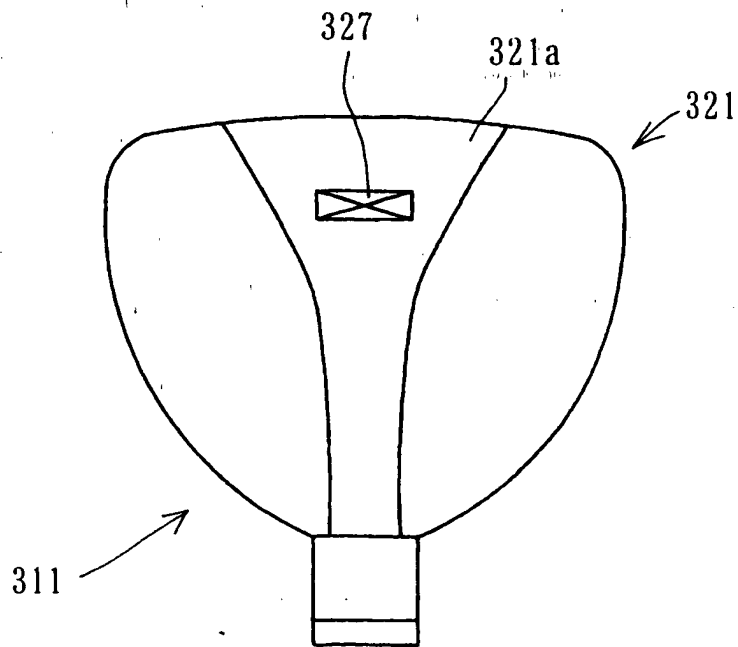
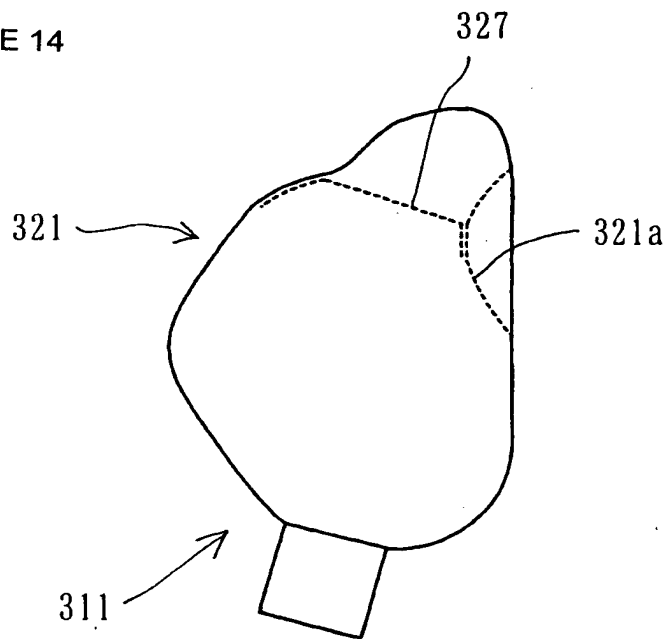


FIGURE 14







SSF:ddj

August 28, 2003  
78731

Inventor: Yasuhito Miyata  
Appln. No.: 10/601,927; Filed: June 23, 2003  
Title: AIRBAG APPARATUS, MOTORCYCLE WITH AIRBAG APPARATUS, AND  
METHOD OF MANUFACTURING AIRBAG APPARATUS

Confirmation No. 8015

Enclosed herewith please find:

1. Amendment Transmittal (2 pages) (in duplicate)
2. Amendment (8 pages)
3. One (1) sheet of formal drawings

Hon. Commissioner for Patents

Sir:

Please acknowledge receipt of the above-identified documents by applying the Patent and Trademark Office receipt stamp hereto and mailing this card.

Respectfully,

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